



**SUBJECT:** City of Burlington Housing Strategy

**TO:** Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Cttee.

**FROM:** Community Planning Department

Report Number: PL-05-22

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 502-02-73

Date to Committee: June 7, 2022

Date to Council: June 21, 2022

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### **Recommendation:**

Approve the proposed Housing Strategy attached as Appendix A to community planning department report PL-05-22.

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to present the Housing Strategy (attached as Appendix A to this report) as well as to provide an overview of the Housing Strategy project, the process and to provide details about how the feedback collected over the course of the Housing Strategy project informed the Housing Strategy. This report also provides information about the next steps staff will take to move the Housing Strategy to action.

### **Vision to Focus Alignment:**

- Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth

Increasing options for housing across the city was identified as a top priority and goal in the From Vision to Focus Plan. A key action item associated with this priority was 'to complete the City's Housing Strategy and implement the plan to address the needs related to young families, senior's housing, affordable housing, special needs housing and newcomers by Q2-2022'.

- Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture

From Vision to Focus identified being a municipal leader in community engagement and collaboration as a top priority and goal. The key action item associated with this priority is to employ a range of communication and

engagement tactics to ensure citizen engagement represents all residents while also focusing on diverse demographic groups and communities.

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## **Executive Summary:**

The Housing Strategy is a deliverable of the Housing Strategy project which was undertaken over the course of 18 months (See project timeline in Appendix B). The project was initiated in January 2021, when City Council endorsed the [Housing Strategy Proposed Terms of Reference](#) with the objective to:

*“...develop an innovative Housing Strategy for the City of Burlington that sets out policies, tools and actions to address residents’ housing needs now and in the future and will build on and support the Region’s Housing Strategy through the development of local solutions to housing issues in the City of Burlington.”*

The *Burlington Housing Strategy* is attached as Appendix A to this report for Council’s consideration. The Housing Strategy provides a roadmap for addressing local housing needs and increasing housing options that meet the needs of current and future residents at all stages of life and at all income levels. It identifies the key players in housing and their respective roles, including the role of the City of Burlington (See Action 1 of the Housing Strategy).

The Housing Strategy is underpinned by extensive technical work that can be found in the [Housing Needs and Opportunities Report](#). The Housing Needs and Opportunities Report articulates the current state of housing in Burlington as well as current and future housing needs and establishes a toolbox of best practices in housing, focusing on innovative practices and new ideas.

The entire Housing Strategy project was guided by its Engagement Plan (see Appendix C) to deliver public and stakeholder engagement that took place over the course of the project, soliciting over 1,400 responses over the course of 4 online surveys and hosting 6 virtual Open Houses. One key element of the engagement was the Housing Strategy Working Group who along with the Steering Committee guided the preparation of the Housing Strategy.

The Housing Strategy identifies 12 Actions to move toward the vision for housing in Burlington. It provides a set of action-oriented housing objectives (Themes) and an associated implementation plan that also identifies a list of Prioritized Actions and Quick Wins.

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## **Background and Discussion:**

### **1.0 Project Background**

The Housing Strategy project was guided by the Housing Strategy's project plan (attached as Appendix B to this report) and the project Engagement Plan (attached as Appendix C). These two documents worked together to guide the delivery of the Housing Strategy project. A brief description of the work completed can be found below.

### **1.1 Project Initiation**

At the January 14, 2021 Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility (CPRM) Committee meeting, Council considered staff report [PL-02-21](#) which included a [proposed Terms of Reference \(Appendix A to PL-02-21\)](#) outlining the scope of work related to Phase 1 of the City's Housing Strategy project. Council endorsed the proposed terms of reference and authorized the Director of Community Planning to engage consultants through a request for proposal to carry out the Phase 1 work.

#### Project Launch

Staff hosted a Housing Strategy Virtual Launch, on the evening of March 8, 2021 along with an online survey (open from March 1 to March 19) to introduce the project to residents and key stakeholders in the community and to seek input on the development of the Housing Strategy and how the community would like to collaborate on the Housing Strategy, as directed by Council. The Virtual Launch attracted over 100 attendees and the survey had 230 responses. A summary of the launch feedback can be found in the Feedback Report included as [Appendix B](#) to staff report [PL-16-21: Housing Strategy Draft Engagement Plan](#). A [recording of the Virtual Launch](#) is also available on the Get Involved project page. The feedback collected informed the Housing Strategy Engagement Plan which can be found attached to this report in Appendix C.

### **1.2 Draft Engagement Plan and Working Group Launch**

At the April 6, 2021 Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility (CPRM) committee meeting, Council considered [Staff Report PL-16-21](#) which included the [Draft Housing Strategy Engagement Plan](#), attached as [Appendix A](#) to that report. Council authorized the Director of Community Planning to work with the Housing Strategy Working Group and Steering Committee and to finalize the draft Engagement Plan and to appoint Mayor Meed Ward, Councillor Stolte and Councillor Sharman to the Housing Strategy Working Group. The project team also retained Dillon Consulting and SHS as the project consultant team and commenced work.

### Engagement Plan

The Housing Strategy Engagement Plan provided a roadmap of the engagement activities that took place over the course of the Housing Strategy Project. It highlighted at which points in the process engagement was to take place, who was to be engaged and the level of engagement with the sole purpose of guiding engagement toward the decision statement set out in the Engagement Plan:

*“In 2022, Burlington City Council will consider endorsing a City of Burlington Housing Strategy to increase options for housing across the City.”*

The plan also clearly defined which aspects of the process the City and public could influence throughout the discussion. This plan was intended to provide a broad overview of the engagement activities to take place and was subject to change over the course of the project. The Engagement Plan was finalized by the Housing Strategy Working Group and Steering Committee in August 2021. For additional details about engagement on the Housing Strategy project, the feedback collected and how it informed the Housing Strategy please see the Engagement section of this report and the Feedback Report attached as Appendix D.

### Housing Strategy Working Group

The Housing Strategy Terms of Reference endorsed by Council in January identified the establishment of a Steering Committee and Working Group to support the delivery of the Housing Strategy project.

In June 2021, the City Manager appointed 25 members to the Housing Strategy Working Group after soliciting applicants on the Housing Strategy project website and promoting the Working Group through ads in the Burlington Post, on Social Media and the Get Involved Project Web Page. The Working Group received over 45 applicants from a broad range of residents and professionals with varied experience and expertise. The Working Group is comprised of members of Council, regional staff, professionals in both the profit and non-profit housing sectors and a wide range of residents from varied backgrounds with varied life experiences. The Housing Strategy Working Group has been meeting on a monthly basis since June 2021. The Working Group finalized the [Working Group Guidelines](#) in July 2021. As outlined in the Guidelines, all of the Working Group meetings were streamed live for public observation and recorded and published on the [project web page](#) which is housed on the City’s engagement platform: “Get Involved Burlington” with closed captioning along with the meeting presentation slides and agendas.

The Working Group provided invaluable insights and acted as a sounding board over the course of the Housing Strategy Project. They influenced the project at every stage, advising on local issues and providing key insights given their diverse backgrounds. Further, the Working Group members championed the project by promoting project

engagement opportunities through their networks and have been instrumental in providing critical feedback and ideas about ways to improve engagement outcomes on the Housing Strategy and ways to reach a wider audience. Over the past year, the members of the Housing Strategy Working Group have read thousands of pages, researched issues, challenged assumptions and shared their perspective, insights and expertise to create this Housing Strategy. A summary of the Working Group feedback and how it informed the Draft and Final Housing Strategy, as well as the engagement can be found in the Feedback Report attached as Appendix D.

### **1.3 Preparation of the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report**

As part of stage 2 of the project, the Consultant team initiated work on 4 internal technical memos. These technical memos were generated for internal purposes to seek comments and feedback from the Steering Committee and Working Group as well as Regional and City Staff. These technical memos then formed the basis of the Housing Strategy, Housing Needs and Opportunities Report.

The Housing Needs and Opportunities Report attached as [Appendix A to Report PL-48-21](#) provides a detailed picture of housing needs and opportunities in the City of Burlington based on the technical project work completed. The report serves as a body of detailed knowledge that formed the basis of the Housing Strategy. Chapter 5 of the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report provided the preliminary Vision Statement, Themes and Actions which were the subject of public consultation from January to February 2022 (see Appendix D for more details).

#### **Online Survey 2**

On August 2021, City Staff launched the Housing Strategy Project's second online survey. The second online survey focused on understanding personal experiences, challenges, and ideas to enhance housing access in Burlington. The feedback collected from the second survey was used to support statistical data and to help identify housing-related issues, gaps, and needs of Burlington residents as the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report was prepared.

A total of 874 participants completed the survey. The respondents represented a wide range of ages and backgrounds from across the entire City of Burlington and beyond. The survey received a large number of personal stories and narrative responses. It was these open-ended responses to survey questions that provided insight into the lived experience of Burlington residents, and helped to identify common themes. The findings of the survey are outlined in section 3.4 and Appendix D of the [Housing Needs and Opportunities Report](#).

### The Role of the City of Burlington

Based on the technical research completed in earlier project phases, and subsequent discussions with City of Burlington Council; the project Steering Committee; and the project Working Group, it was determined that the City of Burlington, as a lower tier municipality, has two key opportunities to do its part to “make moves” in addressing the broader housing crisis:

- First, through partnership and advocacy to help deliver the deep affordability and housing options needed by residents of Burlington within the lower income deciles; and
- Second, through focusing on implementing the direct actions that the City can take to increase housing options and opportunities for residents of Burlington within the middle-income deciles.

While the roles identified remained the same between the draft and final Housing Strategies, Actions 1 and 2 of the Housing Strategy were refined in order to articulate more clearly the role of the City.

### Key Findings of the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report

The key findings of the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report are summarized below:

- Rental housing supply is not meeting the needs of existing and future residents.
- Housing is not affordable for many Burlington residents. In the City of Burlington, the supply of housing that is affordable for all incomes is diminishing. In particular, home ownership for middle-income earners has become a challenge;
- Burlington residents do not feel there is enough diversity or options for housing in the City to meet residents’ needs throughout their lifecycle;
- As Burlington continues to grow and evolve, housing options will need to reflect this growth and change;
- As a lower-tier municipality, one of the greatest actions and areas of focus will be to leverage relationships with upper levels of government and local community organizations to advocate for housing affordability and foster partnerships for the delivery of housing to address needs across the continuum; and
- A lack of understanding among the general public about the benefits of a range and mix of housing options in the City often results in opposition to development that would address housing gaps.

## **2.0 Risk Management During the Housing Strategy Project**

The Housing Strategy’s Terms of Reference Identified a series of project risks, the table below provides a summary of those risks that were observed and how the Housing Strategy Project managed those risks. Overall the identified risks that did materialize did

not ultimately have an impact on the timing, scope and resources required to complete the work.

Risk: Changes to Provincial Planning policy, legislation or regulations

Over the course of the 18 month Housing Strategy project, there has been a number of policy and legislative shifts at the Federal, Provincial and Regional levels of government. Elements of the Housing Strategy including Action 5: “*Develop and Deliver an Annual Housing Monitoring and Reporting System to Council*”, along with the Implementation plan, provides opportunities for the City’s Housing Strategy to remain responsive to changes at all levels of Government and to seize funding and partnership opportunities as they arise.

**Federal Government Policy Shifts:** During the Housing Strategy project, the Federal Government released the [National Housing Strategy](#), Canada’s first Housing Strategy after over 2 years of intensive public consultation and research. It is the “*largest and most ambitious federal housing program in Canadian history. Over the next decade, it will invest \$70+ billion to build stronger communities and help Canadians across the country access a safe, affordable home.*” The Strategy proposes a series of initiatives including the National Housing Co-Investment Fund and the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive and highlights the critical importance of partnering with Provincial Governments.

Actions 1 and 2 of the City of Burlington’s Housing Strategy provide opportunities for alignment with the Federal Housing Strategy and positions the City, to collaborate with Halton Region and the Provincial Governments.

Further, as a result of Staff Direction [SD-29-21](#), the Housing Strategy project team in collaboration with the Burlington Lands Partnership (BLP) team are currently in the process of delivering a report which among other things, provides a “Review of Federal and Provincial Housing Programs and will include commentary on the applicability of the program to school site re-use.” For more details about this work, see the “Project Connections” section below.

**Provincial Government Policy Shifts:** In December 2021 the Provincial government struck a nine-member Housing Affordability Task Force (‘the Task Force’). Then, in February 2022, the Province released the [Report of the Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force](#). This report made 55 recommendations that are intended to accelerate progress in closing the housing supply gap to improve housing affordability throughout the Province.

On March 1, 2022 City Staff presented a report to Council, [PL-27-22: Response to the Housing Affordability Task Force Recommendation Report](#). This report provides an overview of the recommendations made in the Task Force Report and provided comments to the Government of Ontario, from the City of Burlington’s perspective to inform the next actions taken by the Province. [Appendix B](#) of report [PL-27-22](#) provides



a table indicating where the preliminary actions outlined in Chapter 5 of the Housing Strategy's Housing Needs and Opportunities Report align with the recommendations of the Housing Affordability Task Force Report, identifying a number of preliminary actions that aligned with the Report recommendations. All of these preliminary actions were carried forward to the Final Housing Strategy, some as sub actions, and some as one of the 12 Actions proposed (Action 2, 7, 8, 10 and 11) in the Housing Strategy.

On March 30, 2022 the Provincial Government announced Bill109, *More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022*. The omnibus Bill amended 6 different statutes, including the *Planning Act* and the *Development Charges Act*. The Province gave a third reading and Royal Assent to the Bill on April 14, 2022 bringing the bill into effect despite the commenting period having yet to close. City Staff did provide comments to Council on April 19, 2022 through [Staff Report PL-47-22: Bill 109 "More Homes for Everyone Act" – Staff Comments for ERO](#). With the recommendation that the report be forwarded to the Provincial Government to be considered as the City's submission of comments. Throughout this process, project staff monitored these changes, provided feedback to the above noted reports and made adjustments to the Housing Strategy where appropriate.

**Regional Government Policy Shifts:** Over the course of the Housing Strategy, Halton Regional Staff has continued their work on the Regional Official Plan Review. Recently, through Draft ROPA 49, the Region received direction from Regional Council to prepare a Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) that advances in 2 stages, allocating population and employment growth first to 2041 (directed to the existing approved urban boundary) allocating the remaining population and employment growth to 2051 in a subsequent Regional Official Plan Amendment. This shift in the timing of population and employment allocation does not have an impact on the recommendations of the Housing Strategy.

Risk: Expectations of the outcome of the Housing Strategy

The project's terms of reference and engagement plan worked to clarify project expectations. The team worked to continually communicate project objectives and key outcomes throughout the process, seeking guidance from the Housing Strategy Working Group and Steering Committee and applying the feedback received at each stage of the project.

Risk: Confusion over the relationship between the City's Housing Strategy and the Region's housing work as Housing Service Provider

The Housing Strategy's Engagement Plan provided a clear understanding of the project scope and how it builds on and supports the work undertaken at the Region. This messaging was important in all Housing Strategy project deliverables. The City worked closely with Regional Staff to understand and provide clarity about the relationship between the City and Region. Further the Working Group provided key insights into how



this relationship was understood and communicated. The relationship between the City's Housing Strategy and the Region's work as a housing provider is highlighted in the findings of the [Housing Needs and Opportunities Report](#) and is articulated in the Housing Strategy related to a number of Actions.

Risk: Lack of buy in from community and community partners

Over the course of engagement on the Housing Strategy project, competing interests and attitudes toward housing emerged between those who are in need of housing and those that express opposition to changes to their community. Concerns were raised about how change will impact their neighbourhood, their quality of life and the value of their homes, some rooted in misinformation, stereotypes or prejudice directed to those who may live in certain dwelling types. While this opposition and lack of buy in was not shared by the majority of those who provided feedback, it was present throughout the project.

It is important to note that the Engagement Plan acknowledges the limitations of engagement, especially during COVID and that this will need to be considered in the context of reaching vulnerable or historically underrepresented communities. The demographic questions used in the online surveys and at the virtual events were critical to understanding and contextualizing the feedback received. Through the demographic information collected, staff were able to understand that while a wide range of groups were reached through engagement, the largest group represented were homeowners over the age of 50. In response to this, and through the guidance of the Housing Strategy Working Group, city staff adjusted the engagement approach, adding engagement events in order to acquire feedback from a broader range of residents.

The project team held specialized engagement opportunities with Burlington Youth (through the Burlington Youth Council) and a virtual Open House hosted in partnership with Halton Multicultural Council. However, where voices were absent, the team relied on a combination of proxies such as input from the Working Group, statistical data (like the census) and keeping those members of the community at the forefront as the Draft and final Housing Strategy was prepared. Despite some dissenting voices, keeping in mind that increasing options for housing across the city was identified as a top priority and goal in the From Vision to Focus Plan.

A key action item associated with this priority was *'to complete the City's Housing Strategy and implement the plan to address the needs related to young families, senior's housing, affordable housing, special needs housing and newcomers by Q2-2022'*. As such, preliminary Actions, that were introduced as part of the [Housing Needs and Opportunities Report](#) that address these objectives were moved forward to the final Housing Strategy as either Actions or sub actions, for more details, please see the Engagement Feedback Report, attached as Appendix D).

It should also be noted that many of the Actions of the Housing Strategy will have additional processes that will require their own public consultation process.

### 3.0 Housing Strategy

This Housing Strategy establishes a road map and acts as a guiding document for the City to use in order to take action and work towards meeting the housing needs of the community and moving the city closer to the Vision for housing in Burlington. It provides a set of city-wide housing objectives (the Themes) supported by 12 Actions and an implementation and monitoring plan. It sets priorities, identifies quick wins and provides pathways forward that are responsive to change.

This innovative strategy builds upon [the Region of Halton's Housing Strategy](#), it provides a clear definition of the role of the City of Burlington and how it can work together with the Region of Halton and other levels of Government and housing providers to move Burlington closer to the Vision for Housing. The Housing Strategy also builds upon the policies of the City of Burlington's new Official Plan, Strategic Plan and Vision to Focus and identifies connection opportunities with other city projects such as the Burlington Lands Partnership, the Major Transit Station Area Study and the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review Project.

The Housing Strategy identifies 12 recommended actions that the City and other strategic decision-makers can take to increase housing options across the City. The Housing Strategy provides a list of Priority Actions that are imperative to making progress on the Housing Strategy in terms of both reasonable effort and high impact. Additionally, the Housing Strategy identifies a series of Actions and Sub Actions as "Quick Wins" that the City can implement in the near-term. The Housing Strategy also includes an implementation plan that provides details about the timing of the 12 Actions, the resources required and the scope of work. The sections below provide more details on the sections of the Housing Strategy.

#### 3.1 Vision Statement

The Vision statement is aspirational and describes an ideal future state for housing in Burlington. The Vision Statement was used to guide the development of the Housing Strategy. Each of the 12 Actions in the Housing Strategy is a way for the City of Burlington to move closer to this vision.

The vision reads as:

***Everyone is welcome in Burlington.***

*Burlington is a city where all current and future residents have access to the housing options that meet their needs at all stages of life, and that are attainable at all income levels.*

The Housing Strategy Vision first appeared in the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report as a "Preliminary Vision" and was considered as part of the engagement on the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report. The Vision was also considered through

engagement on the Draft Housing Strategy, at the Council Workshop as well as with the Housing Strategy Working Group. Details on this engagement can be found in the Feedback Report attached as Appendix D to the subject report.

### 3.2 Themes

The Themes were identified through extensive technical work and consultation and serve as pillars for the Housing Strategy. They serve as a set of city-wide housing objectives. The Themes set out both housing objectives and provide indicators of how the success of each theme will be measured.

1. *Support a Healthy Rental Stock: Protect existing rental buildings and support the creation of new rental units.*
2. *Support a Broad Variety of Housing Types and Forms: Increase housing options that meet the needs of all current and future residents.*
3. *Build Awareness and Capacity: Connect residents and housing providers to programs and resources.*
4. *Advocate for Partnerships: Partner with a wide range of organizations to increase housing options and advocate for change to address gaps in housing options today and tomorrow.*
5. *Take Action, Define and Measure Success: Implement change, define success, measure and report on progress and adjust where necessary.*

### 3.3 Pathways

The actions identified in this Housing Strategy are organized into 5 different pathways. These pathways are based on the approach each action uses to move Burlington closer to the Vision for housing. Each of the actions below have an identified pathway to implementation. These pathways were introduced during consultation on the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report and were refined as a result of this engagement.

1. **Policy, Zoning and Regulation:** These are actions that would propose changes to policy to support, build on, adjust, and/or monitor the City's New Official Plan policies, the City's Zoning By-law and other regulatory tools.
2. **Incentives:** These actions propose exploring various types of financial and other incentives to encourage increased housing options.
3. **Advocacy and Partnerships:** These actions would identify partnerships to increase housing options and identify opportunities to advocate for change to address the gaps in housing options today and tomorrow.

- 4. Housing Strategy Implementation:** These actions would identify ways to implement the Housing Strategy, measure success, and report on progress to adjust the approach, where necessary.
- 5. Required:** These actions are required. This means that these actions would have a role in conforming to Local, Regional, and Provincial policies, addressing a direction from Council, or in completing the Housing Strategy or another City-led project.

### 3.4 Actions

The Housing Strategy includes 12 recommended actions to help the City to move toward the Vision for Housing in the City and achieve the housing themes. The actions, individually and collectively, will assist the City in moving closer to the Vision for Burlington.

Action No.	Recommended Action	Timeframe (short-term, medium-term, or long-term)
1	Clearly define the City's role and responsibility in supporting a diversity of housing options that are attainable at all income levels.	Short-term
2	Act as a connector and partner in the housing system by identifying opportunities to connect people and providers to resources and information related to meeting housing objectives.	Short-term
3	Allocate appropriate staff resources to implement and administer the Housing Strategy and associated actions.	Short-term
4	To meet the objectives of the Housing Strategy, build upon the policies of the new Official Plan, 2020 and use the findings of the Housing Strategy Project to establish minimum targets around housing.	Short-term
5	Develop and Deliver an Annual Housing Monitoring and Reporting System to Council.	Short-term
6	Build upon the policies of Official Plan, 2020 and the findings of the Housing Strategy Project to inform the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law (CZBL) project, to assist	Medium- to long-term

Action No.	Recommended Action	Timeframe (short-term, medium-term, or long-term)
	in broadening the range and mix of housing in the City and to explore tools to streamline processes.	
7	Support, permit, and encourage the development of alternate forms of housing, including higher density types of housing, where feasible and appropriate.	Medium-term
8	Provide incentives through a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the delivery of housing options to meet the needs of residents.	Medium-term
9	Develop an approach to protect Burlington's rental housing stock.	Short-term
10	Identify underused properties, including government owned and non-government owned sites that could be used for housing.	Medium-term
11	Encourage Additional Residential Units (ARUs) and consider a registry and monitoring program to evaluate the success of the framework and to make sure the ARUs meet health and safety standards.	Short- to medium-term
12	Undertake a formal assessment of the potential to introduce inclusionary zoning.	Short-term

### 3.5 Priority Actions

The Housing Strategy includes a set of identified priority actions. These are Actions that are expected to make the greatest impact on advancing towards the City's housing Vision. The priority actions are imperative to making progress on the Housing Strategy in terms of both reasonable effort and high impact. Some of these priority actions also provide quick wins for the City that can be implemented in the near-term.

The Priority Actions identified in the Housing Strategy are listed below:

- Clearly define the City's role and responsibility in supporting a diversity of housing options that are attainable at all income levels;
- Allocate appropriate staff resources to implement and administer the Housing Strategy and associated actions (this is also an identified quick win);

- Establish minimum targets around housing (this is also an identified quick win);
- Develop an annual housing and affordable housing monitoring and reporting system to Council;
- Support and permit alternate forms of housing, including higher density types of housing; and
- Provide incentives through a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for the delivery of housing options to meet the needs of residents.

### **3.6 How the feedback influenced the Draft Housing Strategy**

A summary of the engagement undertaken, and the feedback received on the Preliminary Vision Statement, Themes and Actions can be found in Appendix D to this report. Below is a list of some of the refinements made to the Draft Housing Strategy that were informed by the feedback received between January and March 2022.

- 13 Actions were proposed with supporting sub actions;
- Pathways were added;
- Priority Actions were identified;
- The Themes were revised, and Metrics of success were provided for each Theme;
- The introduction of the Draft Housing Strategy clarified the Housing Strategy's purpose;
- The Draft Housing Strategy highlighted the two key opportunities for Burlington to make moves in addressing housing by creating a specialized subsection within the introduction of the Housing Strategy to identify them as key areas of focus, supported by the themes and actions outlined in the Housing Strategy;
- The Vision Statement was revised slightly by enlarging the first sentence so that "Everyone is Welcome in Burlington" is prominent;
- Further clarity was provided around the monitoring and reporting on the Actions to ensure the Housing Strategy is able to respond to change; and
- Implementation tables were added, indicating the timing, scope of work and resources required for each action.

### **3.7 How the feedback influenced the Final Housing Strategy**

A summary of the engagement undertaken, and the feedback received on the Draft Housing Strategy can be found in Appendix D to this report. Below is a list of some of the refinements made to Finalize the Housing Strategy that were informed by the feedback received on the Draft Housing Strategy between April and May 2022.

- Additional information about the roles of each level of government, and the partnerships between the City and Region was added to the Housing Strategy;
- A set of “Quick Wins” was added to the Housing Strategy;
- A new Action 2 was added to the Housing Strategy: *“Act as a connector and partner in the housing system by identifying opportunities to connect people and providers to resources and information related to meeting housing objectives.”* This action identifies a key role for the City to connect people and providers to resources and information and to partner with other levels of Government and housing providers to advocate for and deliver housing options and deeper affordability.
- Refinements to Action 8 (previously Action 7 in the Draft Housing Strategy ) to expand the types of housing incentivized by a Community Improvement Plan (CIP) such as affordable ownership, rental, 3 bedroom units, accessible units and sustainable developments;
- Refinements to Action 10 (previously Action 9 in the Draft Housing Strategy ) to include detailed notes around recommendations from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario regarding surplus or underutilized crown lands and the repurposing of surplus school lands through donation of the lands to municipalities for housing;
- Action 10 in the Draft Housing Strategy: *“Introduce an expedited/prioritized review process for proposals that would assist the City in meeting targets set out in this Housing Strategy”* was deleted due to the introduction of Bill 109, More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022 which makes changes to the *Planning Act* in regard to the processing time of applications. As a result, this Action has been deleted from the Housing Strategy.
- Action 11 in the Draft Housing Strategy: *“Implement any Regional housing-related policies brought forward through their Official Plan Review as part of a future conformity exercise”* was deleted: As the City of Burlington is statutorily required to conform with the Region of Halton’s Official Plan under the *Planning Act*. Action 11 was deemed required and removed from the Housing Strategy. Comments from Staff and the public illustrated that this was redundant as it is required and therefore could be deleted as an action.

## Strategy/process

The Housing Strategy’s [Terms of Reference](#) established a framework for the Housing Strategy project. The scope of work for Phase 1 was developed to target the Q2 2022 delivery of the City’s Housing Strategy Project, as identified in the City’s 2018 – 2022 From Vision to Focus Plan. This Report and its appendices represent the conclusion of the phase 1 project work. Work will continue on several areas such as the formal assessment of the potential to introduce Inclusionary Zoning (Action 12) and the report on Staff Direction [SD-29-21](#) related to surplus school sites.



The second phase of work will begin in earnest upon approval of the Housing Strategy when staff will commence implementation of the Housing Strategy based on the direction of Council and guided by the implementation plan of the Housing Strategy. The Implementation Tables of the Housing Strategy indicate “Short-Term” actions, these are actions that could be completed in the shortest amount of time.

### Quick Wins

The Housing Strategy identifies a number of quick wins, these Actions and sub actions fall into two categories:

1. Those that will be completed upon the approval of the Housing Strategy, these are:
  - Action 1: “*Clearly define the City's role and responsibility in supporting a diversity of housing options that are attainable at all income levels.*” Once approved, the Housing Strategy serves to complete Action 1.
  - Action 4: “*To meet the objectives of the Housing Strategy, build upon the policies of the new Official Plan, 2020 and use the findings of the Housing Strategy Project to establish minimum targets around housing.*” If approved, the Targets appended to the Housing Strategy can be used by the City on a go-forward basis when evaluating development applications. The Housing Strategy states that the City could explore revising the City’s Staff Recommendation Report templates on development applications to add a section to inform Council on how development proposals align with the targets set out in the Housing Strategy, this could be implemented in short order as a quick win. Further, the City may want to update Policy 3.1.1(2) g) of the Official Plan to make specific reference to the Housing Strategy at a later date. However, the timing of this process is uncertain due to the ongoing appeals process that the city’s Official Plan is subject to.
2. Those that could be completed in short order once the Housing Strategy is approved by Council, these are:
  - Sub action 19 of Action 10: “*Identify underutilized properties that could be intensified to provide additional housing supply. This could include government-owned properties (local, Regional, Provincial) as well as underutilized sites that are not government-owned*”. This sub action could be completed in short order and is related to Staff Direction SD-29-21 (see the “Project Connections”) section below for more details.
  - An element of Action 11: “*Encourage Additional Residential Units (ARUs) and consider a registry and monitoring program to evaluate the success of the framework and to make sure the ARUs meet health and safety standards*”. Implementing zoning regulations for Additional Residential Units in advance of

the Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review project could be investigated as a quick win.

- Various sub actions of Action 6: *“Build upon the policies of Official Plan, 2020 and the findings of the Housing Strategy Project to inform the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law (CZBL) project, to assist in broadening the range and mix of housing in the City and to explore tools to streamline processes”* could be investigated with the potential to be quick wins.

It should be noted however, that there are a number of Actions and sub actions within the Housing Strategy which could be impacted by the appeals process currently underway on the City of Burlington’s Official Plan, 2020. It will be critical for all partners in this process and in city building to work together to move the new Official Plan, 2020 through the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) process, to bring in the new policies of the Official Plan and to minimize its impact on City initiatives like the Housing Strategy. For more information about the Official Plan appeals process please see the [City’s Official Plan](#).

### Next Steps

Staff will continue to explore options to move the Housing Strategy to action. Below are several actions that Staff will start or continue to work on:

- Work with Development Review to find ways to incorporate the consideration of Housing Strategy objectives in advance of its implementation throughout the development review process;
- Continue work on Action 12 of the Housing Strategy to undertake a formal assessment of the potential to introduce Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) through the preparation and peer review of a Municipal Assessment Report to be delivered by the end of 2022; and
- Staff will work over the summer and fall on implementation of the Housing Strategy and report back to Council with an update in Q1 2023.

### **Options Considered**

N/A

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### **Financial Matters:**

The estimated budget for the Phase 1 work was \$300,000 maximum, inclusive of the staff led engagement component. The Phase 1 work was funded by the Policy initiatives reserve fund. Over the course of the project, there were 2 scope changes:

1. The scope of work related to the delivery of the Inclusionary Zoning Municipal Assessment Report was expanded as a result of stakeholder feedback. This

increased scope of work was captured within the Housing Strategy's existing \$300,000 budget.

2. There was an increase in the Housing Strategy's scope of work as a result of Staff Direction [SD-29-21](#). The cost of this scope change was \$27,500 and was funded by the Province of Ontario's Streamline Development Approval Fund (SDFA) Initiative, as identified in Staff Report [CS-04-22: Streamline Development Approval Fund](#).

## **Other Resource Impacts**

The Housing Strategy attached as Appendix A to this report is a strategic document designed to provide guidance to the City of Burlington through a series of Actions designed to move the City closer to the Vision for Housing and it is ambitious in its recommendations.

Implementation of the Housing Strategy will have significant costs. Some costs will be incurred over the near-term, while others over the longer-term as outlined in the Implementation Tables of the Housing Strategy. Each of the Housing Strategy's Actions will require their own processes, work plans and public consultation in order to determine how to allocate funds that return the best public interest outcomes possible. This work will be guided by the objectives of the Housing Strategy, including the Housing Strategy Themes which define how success will be measured and provide metrics for measuring success. This work will also be informed by the technical findings of the [Housing Needs and Opportunities Report](#) and stakeholder engagement.

## **Project Connections**

### **Burlington Lands Partnership**

In October 2020, Council considered report ([CM-29-20](#)) from the City Manager's Office through which direction was received to establish in principle, a new corporate structure for a Burlington Lands Partnership (BLP) to enable the City to focus on strategic lands related to key priorities, one of which is to deliver an increased supply of affordable housing through proactive long-term strategies and innovative partnerships. In February 2021, Council confirmed the formation of the Burlington Lands Partnership and endorsed the [BLP's Terms of Reference](#).

The Burlington Lands Partnership is a new concept and represents an implementing structure within the City of Burlington that will continue to evolve and develop over the next few years. The City will continue to explore how the Burlington Lands Partnership can assist in the implementation of the City's Housing Strategy. To this end, Staff has identified the need for the Housing Strategy and the Burlington Lands Partnership to work together to achieve multiple objectives. Connections to the BLP and the role that it

can play to take on a leadership role and to champion the objectives of the Housing Strategy can be seen throughout the Housing Strategy but particularly in Theme 4, Actions 2 and 10.

#### Staff Direction SD-29-21

On October 6th, City Council considered [Staff Report CM-22-21: Burlington Lands Partnership Update](#) at Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk and Accountability Committee. Staff Received Direction from Council ([SD-29-21](#)):

As an outcome of Staff Direction SD-29-21, the Housing Strategy project team is currently working with the BLP project team to provide a “*current practice review of former school site uses in other municipalities*” and “*complete a review of existing federal and provincial housing support programs*” as detailed in the staff direction in Q3, 2022.

As a result of this Staff Direction, the Housing Strategy project team with the BLP project team are working together and have retained Dillon Consulting to deliver a report to address this Staff Direction in part. The work builds upon the findings of the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report to prepare a report that addresses the below 4 items:

- A current practice review of former school site uses in other municipalities, including opportunities for attainable housing;
- A complete review of existing federal and provincial housing support programs, in coordination with the work underway via the Housing Strategy;
- Opportunities for housing, parkland and community uses on these sites, in partnership with other agencies, non-profit organizations and levels of government, including Halton Region, and coordinated with the work of the Burlington Lands Partnership;
- Budgetary implications for known and potential sites that may become available; and;
- A community engagement strategy on potential uses for these sites.

The findings of this report will, among other things, serve to inform the implementation of Actions 1, 2 and 10 of the Housing Strategy. The delivery of this report is targeted for July 2022.

#### Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) Area-Specific Planning

In June 2021, CPRM Committee considered Staff Report [PL-27-21: Major Transit Station Area \(MTSA\) Area-Specific Planning Terms of Reference](#). City Council endorsed the Terms of Reference, directing staff to commence work on the project.

The MTSA Area Specific Planning project work continues to build on the former Mobility Hubs study that began in 2017 and was paused in 2019. This study will complete the required technical studies to support the completion of three area specific plans for each of the City's MTSA's (Aldershot GO, Burlington GO, and Appleby GO). The implementing Official Plan, Zoning Bylaw Amendments and other implementation strategies will also be completed by December 2022. These areas have been identified as Protected Major Transit Station Areas (PMTSAs) through the approval of Regional Official Plan Amendment 48. PMTSA is a municipal tool to support higher order transit infrastructure around Major Transit Station Areas. The tool restricts appeals of certain required official plan policies and zoning such as transit-supportive densities and uses. The City must now develop policies as set out in the *Planning Act* and in the Regional Official Plan. One element related to the identification of the Protected MTSA is the opportunity for the City to examine the use of the Inclusionary Zoning *Planning Act* tool to establish affordable housing targets in Protected MTSA's. On January 11, 2022, Staff brought forward recommended preferred precinct plans and supporting policy directions for the 3 PMTSA areas through report [PL-02-22](#).

Staff have identified the MTSA Area-Specific Planning project as a key project connection. The Housing Strategy will inform the MTSA work which will examine the use of Inclusionary Zoning in the Protected MTSA's as well as to identify other policy and regulatory approaches and tools to increase housing options in the PMTSA's.

#### Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw Review

The City's Zoning By-law is a key implementation tool of the City's Official Plan policies. With the approval of the new Official Plan in 2020, the City must start work to update the City's existing Zoning By-law. In 2022, the City will initiate a Comprehensive Zoning By-law Review (CZBLR) to ensure that the City's Zoning By-law is in conformity with the Official Plan and is able to implement its policies. It is important to acknowledge that there have been significant changes introduced through the new Official Plan that will broaden permissions for the delivery of housing throughout the City and will influence the CZBLR Project and the development of implementing regulations. The Housing Strategy team is working closely with the CZBLR team to provide them with the findings of the Housing Strategy Project and the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report as this project's work is scoped and the Terms of Reference is prepared. In particular, Action 6 of the Housing Strategy recommends: *Build(ing) upon the policies of Official Plan, 2020 and the findings of the Housing Strategy Project to inform the Comprehensive Zoning By-Law (CZBL) project, to assist in broadening the range and mix of housing in the City and to explore tools to streamline processes.*

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## **Climate Implications**

On April 23, 2019, Burlington's City Council unanimously passed a motion to declare a climate emergency. The City's Housing Strategy provides innovative solutions to address local housing issues while making better use of existing infrastructure and services through the provision of additional residential units and directing new housing options in locations for intensification, such as Major Transit Station Areas with more diverse options for alternative modes of transportation, to support the provision of a wider range of housing options and minimize impacts on the environment.

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## **Engagement Matters:**

Over the course of the 18 month Housing Strategy Project, Staff led engagement on the Housing Strategy project. This engagement was informed by the Housing Strategy Engagement Plan. This engagement process resulted in:

- Over 1,400 survey responses over the course of 4 online surveys;
- 6 virtual Open Houses;
- 5 presentations to Community Planning, Regulation and Mobility Committee;
- A variety of meetings with members of the development community;
- A Virtual Council Workshop;
- 15 Working Group Meetings;
- Presentations to Ward townhalls, Advisory Committees and the Burlington Youth Council;
- A variety of meetings with the Housing Strategy Steering Committee, City Staff and Regional Staff;
- Numerous phone conversations, one on one meetings and email correspondence; and
- Engagement with the development community, including one on one interviews with development community representatives to inform the Inclusionary Zoning Municipal Assessment Report work, currently underway.

For details on the engagement tactics used, the feedback collected and how it informed the Housing Strategy please see the feedback report attached as Appendix D to this report.

All of the engagement milestones and tactics outlined in the Engagement Plan were delivered. However, over the course of the Housing Strategy project, the project team identified additional opportunities to seek feedback and provide additional information about the Housing Strategy project, particularly, opportunities to reach a wider range of people. These added items can be found below.

- Housing Strategy Open House on the Housing Needs and Opportunities Report, November 29, 2021;
- Council Workshop, March 21, 2022;
- Virtual Engagement with the Burlington Youth Student Council, April 5, 2022; and
- A Virtual Open House in partnership with Halton Multicultural Council, April 23, 2022.

Details of this engagement can be found in the Engagement Feedback Report attached as appendix D.

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## Conclusion:

The Housing Strategy, once approved, provides a roadmap for addressing local housing needs and increasing housing options that meet the needs of current and future residents at all stages of life and at all income levels. It identifies the key players in housing and their respective roles, including the role of the City of Burlington.

The Housing Strategy is underpinned by extensive technical work that can be found in the [Housing Needs and Opportunities Report](#). This report articulates the current state of housing in Burlington as well as current and future housing needs and establishes a toolbox of best practices in housing, focusing on innovative practices and new ideas. In the coming months, staff will begin the work of moving the Housing Strategy to action, guided by the Housing Strategy's Implementation Plan.

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Respectfully submitted,

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**Appendices:**

- A. Housing Strategy
- B. Project Milestones
- C. Housing Strategy Engagement Plan
- D. Housing Strategy Feedback Report

**Notifications:**

Curt Benson, Region of Halton

**Report Approval:**

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Director of Legal Services & Corporation Counsel.